

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A bill handling apparatus comprising a deposit/withdrawal unit and a base unit located at upper and lower sides and one or a plurality of intermediate units located between the deposit/withdrawal unit and the base unit inside a casing having openings for inserting and discharging bills therethrough at an upper part of the front surface thereof, wherein:

the deposit/withdrawal unit includes a bill introducing mechanism having a discriminating device for bills and adapted to introduce the bills through an insertion slot corresponding to the opening for inserting the bills, a bill discharging mechanism for discharging the bills to a discharge slot corresponding to the opening for discharging the bills, and a conveying mechanism which can be driven in forward and reverse directions, one end of which is selectively brought into communication with the bill introducing mechanism and the bill discharging mechanism via a switcher at a rear part of this unit, and the other end of which is adapted to convey the bills along a bill conveyance path extending to a bottom end portion of this unit;

the base unit includes a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which can be driven in forward and reverse directions and convey the bills within a specified range from the upper end of this unit behind the bill storage section, and

a taking-in and taking-out mechanism for the bills which can be driven in forward and reverse directions and enables the bills to be taken in and out between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section; and

each intermediate unit includes a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which can be driven in forward and reverse directions and convey the bills within a range extending from the upper end to the bottom end of this unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism for bills which can be driven in forward and reverse directions and enables the bills to be taken in and out between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section, and a switcher for switching a bill moving direction between the conveying mechanism and the taking-in and taking-out mechanism.

2. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a driving source for the conveying mechanisms is provided in the base unit, a driving force of the driving source is transmitted to the conveying mechanism of the base unit and also to the respective conveying mechanisms of the intermediate unit(s) and the deposit/withdrawal unit via transmitter between the units, wherein the transmitter between the units include gears in mesh with each other between the units.

3. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein driving portions of the taking-in and taking-out mechanisms are individually provided in the base unit and the respective intermediate units.

4. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an auxiliary unit provided above one or more of the base unit and the intermediate unit(s), wherein the auxiliary unit includes a storage space expanding portion in communication with the bill storage section of the unit located right below, and a conveying mechanism which can be driven in forward and reverse directions and is adapted to convey the bills in a range extending from the upper end to the bottom end of this unit behind the bill storage section.

5. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the casing includes a control board unit and a power supply unit, which are electrically connected with the respective units via detachable connectors.

6. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the respective units are individually withdrawable from the casing.

7. A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1, wherein an entire internal construction comprised of the

respective units is withdrawable with these units connected with each other.